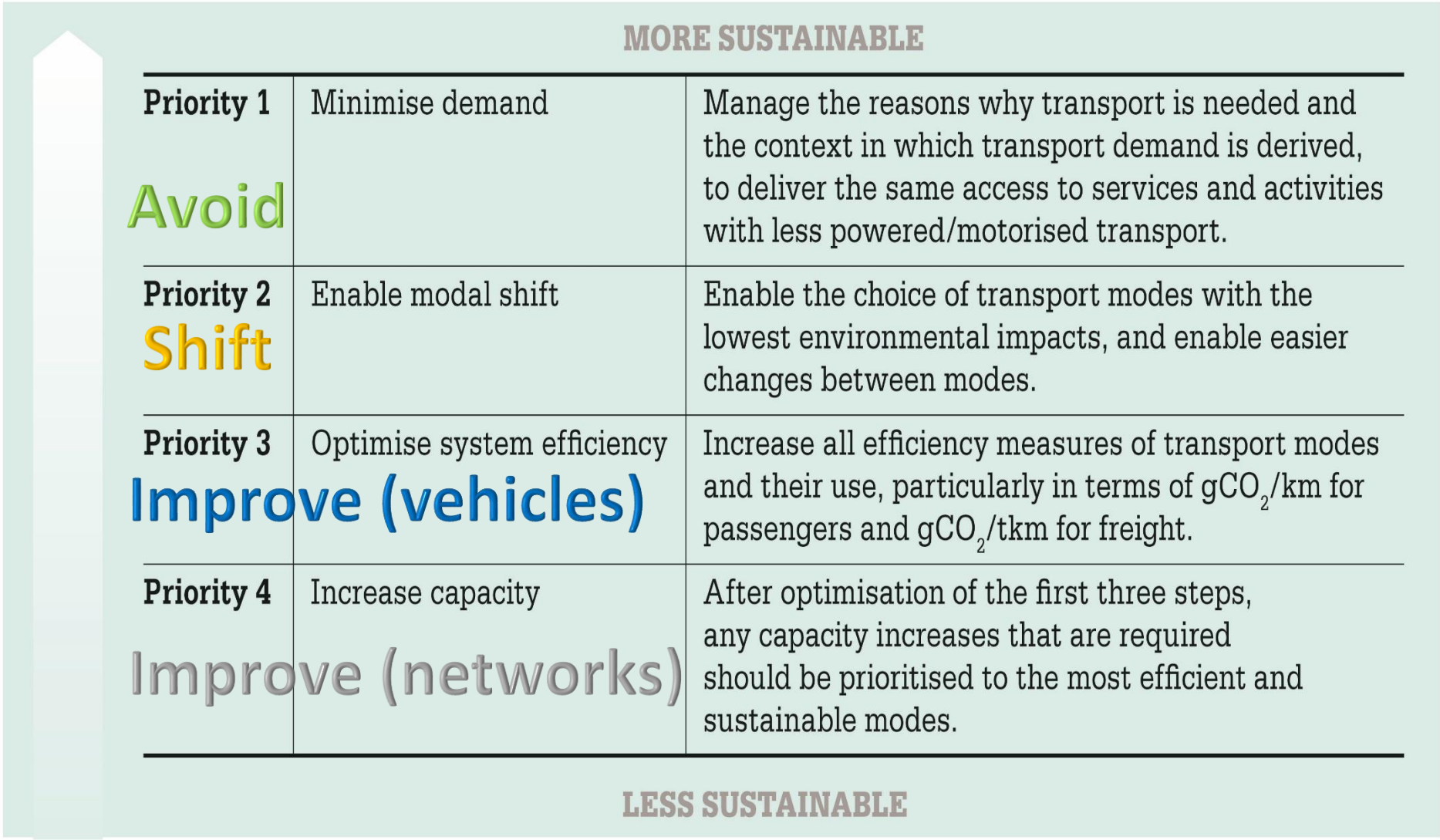
Ultra-Low Emissions Road Freight

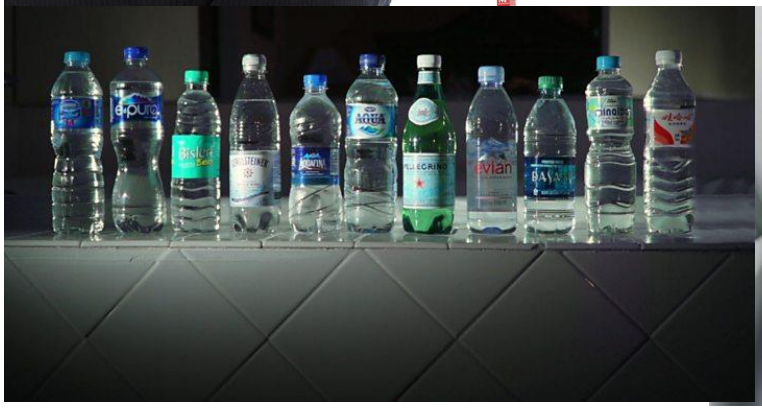
CILT Vision 2035 Conference, Aston University, 19th September 2018

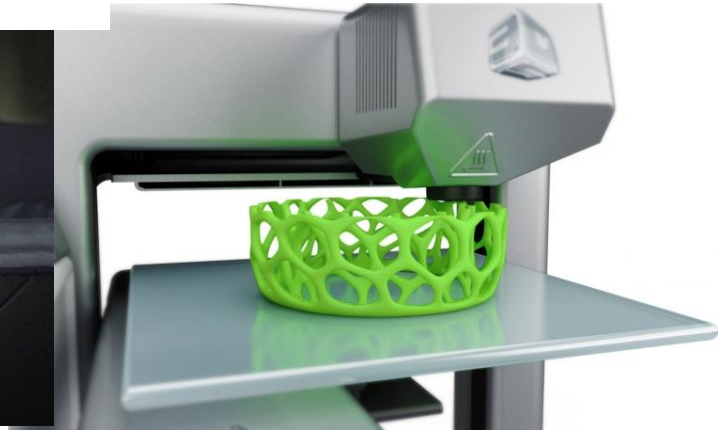
Brian Robinson CEng CEnv FCILT

Figure 1: The Transport Hierarchy



Avoid: Reducing freight demand





Vision 2035:

What if we all ate healthily, and bought only what we needed?

What if we got all the drinking water we need from our own kitchen taps?

What if many consumer products could be "manufactured" locally?

All of these would take tonne-km out of the freight system altogether, and would often have wider, upstream sustainability benefits.

Requires action to influence (or regulate) consumer demand.

Shift: To cleaner, greener modes

Vision 2035:

What if our rail network was fully electrified and balanced the needs of passengers and freight?

What if we made effective use of our ports to move goods around the coast?

What if last-mile logistics were often achieved on foot or by cargo bike?

All of these would shift tonne-km away from trucks and vans and, if managed properly, onto more sustainable modes.

Requires long-term political will.

Improve: Sustainable vehicles and fuels

Vision 2035:

What if the vast majority of urban deliveries were completed by plug-in vehicles?

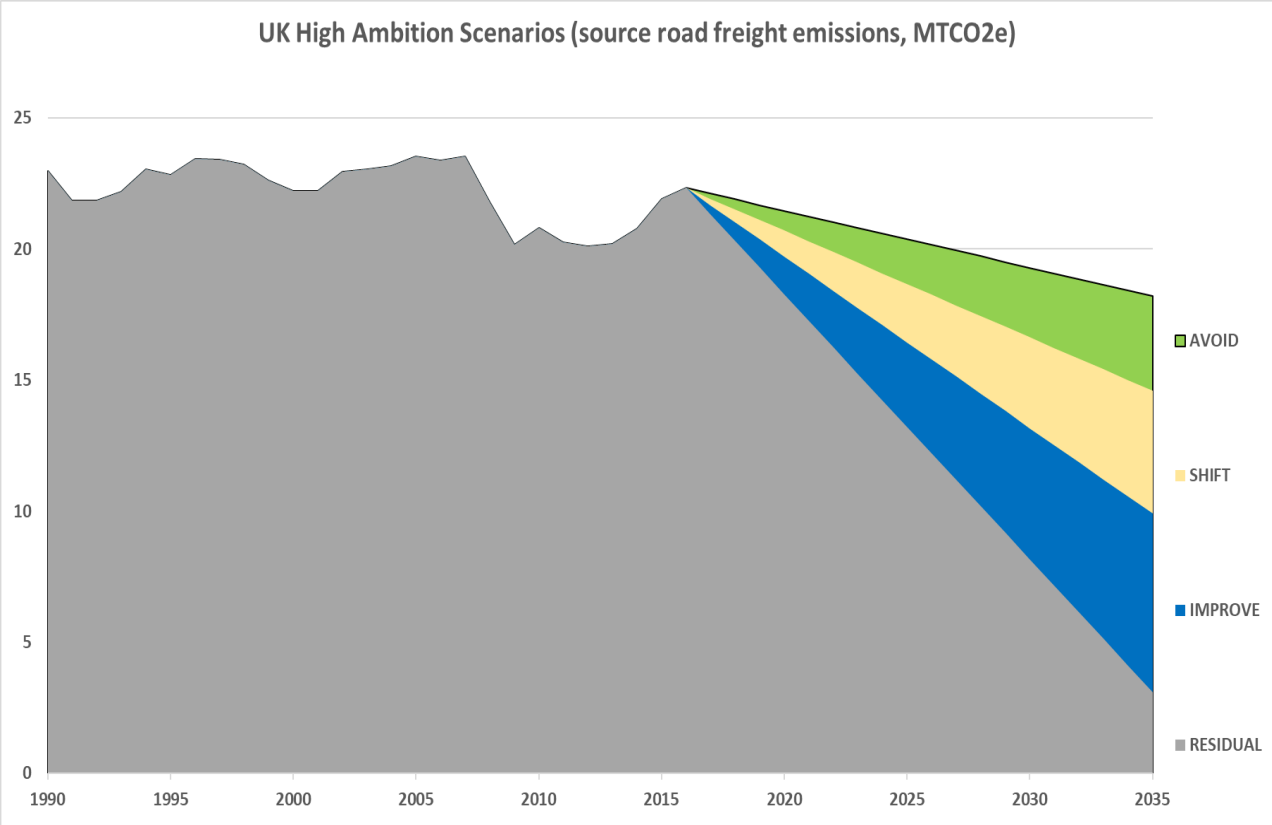
What if many long haul trucks were supplied with energy on the move and were optimally sized?

What if there were a range of renewable and sustainable fuels available for combustion engines?

All of these would cut gCO2e/tonne-km, and would often have wider, air quality benefits, too.

Requires innovation funding and support for early-adopters.

Putting it all together…



Vision 2035:

Business As Usual is not an option.

Don't ignore AVOID & SHIFT.

Even with highly ambitious actions on all three fronts, we won't achieve zero carbon by 2035.

A Vision for 2050?

We know how to decarbonize the road freight sector, but will we?

Thank you for listening…

Brian.Robinson@lowcvp.org.uk